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The Role of Partnerships in Achieving the Vision: Tracking and Assessing Community Engagement

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The Role of Partnerships in Achieving the Vision: Tracking and Assessing Community Engagement

Abstract

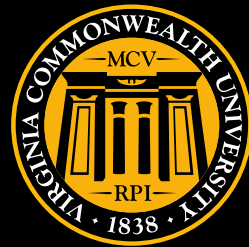
This presentation was given at the Virginia Association for Management Analysis and Planning in Richmond, Virginia on October 20, 2016.

Keywords

community engagement, Virginia Commonwealth University, tracking, assessing, community-engaged research, community impact, engagement, analysis, higher education, urban institutions

Disciplines

Higher Education



VCU

V I R G I N I A C O M M O N W E A L T H U N I V E R S I T Y

The Role of Partnerships in Achieving the Vision: Tracking and Assessing Community Engagement

Valerie Holton, PhD, LCSW, Director for Community-Engaged Research

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The Virginia Association for Management Analysis and Planning

Richmond, Virginia October 20, 2016

Hello
my name is

Today, we will ...

- **Learn strategies to develop and maintain strategic partnerships** across the institution to embrace and support an expanded set of decision-makers, to ground the efforts in the impact on students, and to coordinate institutional studies.
- **Highlight how this can be accomplished** through efforts to measure engagement with and impact on communities.



VCU overview

- » 31,242 students
- » 100 countries represented in student population
- » 11,388 employees
- » 2,170 full-time instructional faculty
- » 7,800 degrees and certificates rewarded (AY 2016)
- » Carnegie classifications:
 - Very high research
 - Community engaged
- » Major NIH Awards / Designations
 - CTSA
 - NCI Cancer Center

Virginia Commonwealth University

STRATEGIC PLAN: QUEST FOR DISTINCTION

Theme I

Become a leader among national research universities in providing all students with high-quality learning/living experiences focused on inquiry, discovery and innovation in a global environment.

Theme II

Attain distinction as a fully integrated urban, public research university through contributions in human health, research, scholarship and creative expression that advance knowledge and enhance the quality of life.

Theme III

Become a national model for community engagement and regional impact.



ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
Data and Decisions for Higher Education

Statement of Aspirational Practice for Institutional Research

Calls for an **expanded definition of “decision makers”**, a **student-focused paradigm**, and the **greater coordination of institutional studies**

But to achieve this vision, it will be necessary to **define, develop and expand the scope and focus of internal partnerships** dealing with community engagement data, outcomes and impact.



Partnership



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Make it real.

Starting our VCU Conversation

Collaboration between

- Office of Planning & Decision Support
- Division of Community Engagement

Big picture view

- *What do we know about Community Engagement at VCU?*
- *How can we begin to measure impact of VCU CE on the region?*
- *How do we intentionally align VCU assets with community needs?*

Whole picture view

- *Including “hard” resources as an “asset”*



Mission and Values

Division of Community Engagement

The VCU Division of Community Engagement mobilizes university-community partnerships that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges and prepares the engaged citizens of tomorrow.

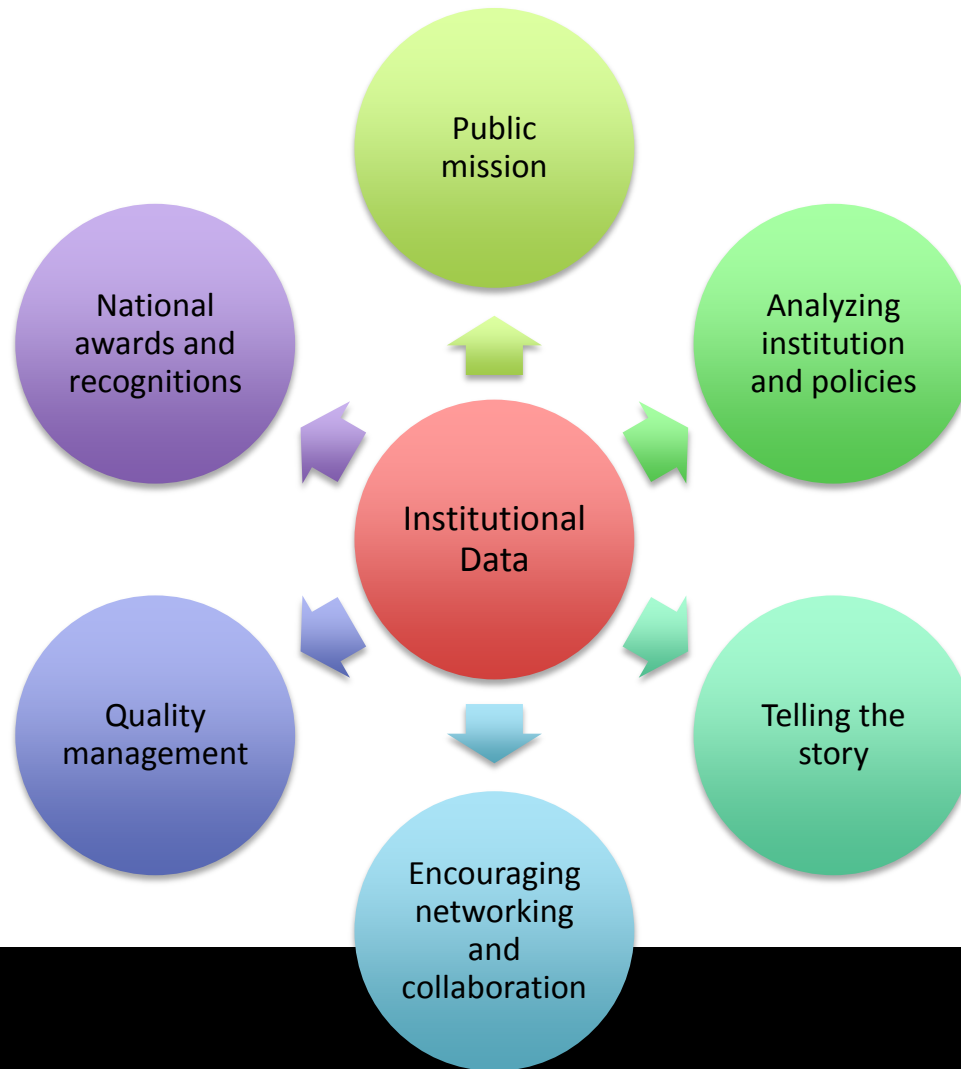
VCU is a community of engaged citizens, working together, changing lives

Office of Planning and Decision Support

Our mission is to empower decision makers, enhance institutional effectiveness, and maintain compliance through accurate, accessible, and actionable data and analyses

OPDS will be the institutional resource for strategic planning and decision support

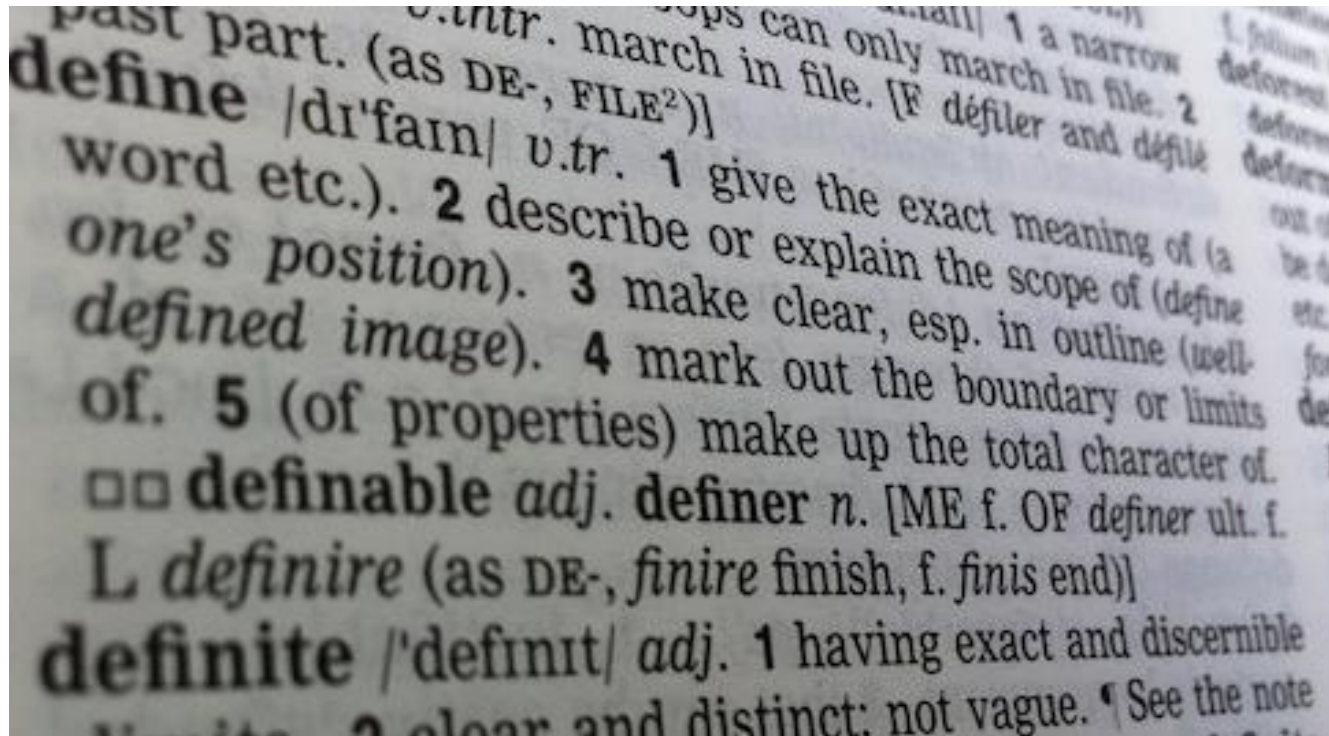
Why do we need institutional data on community engagement activities and impact?



State of the Field

- Agree there is a need for this kind of data
- No consistent measures
- No ONE way to collect the information
- Largely focused on understanding the landscape

First Step: Identify and define what to collect



What
needs to be
collected?

Who else
would like
this
information
?

What is the
operational
definition?

What
systems are
already in
place?

Who would
be good
partner(s)?

How can
the
information
be
gathered?



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Challenge: Complexities Associated with University Data

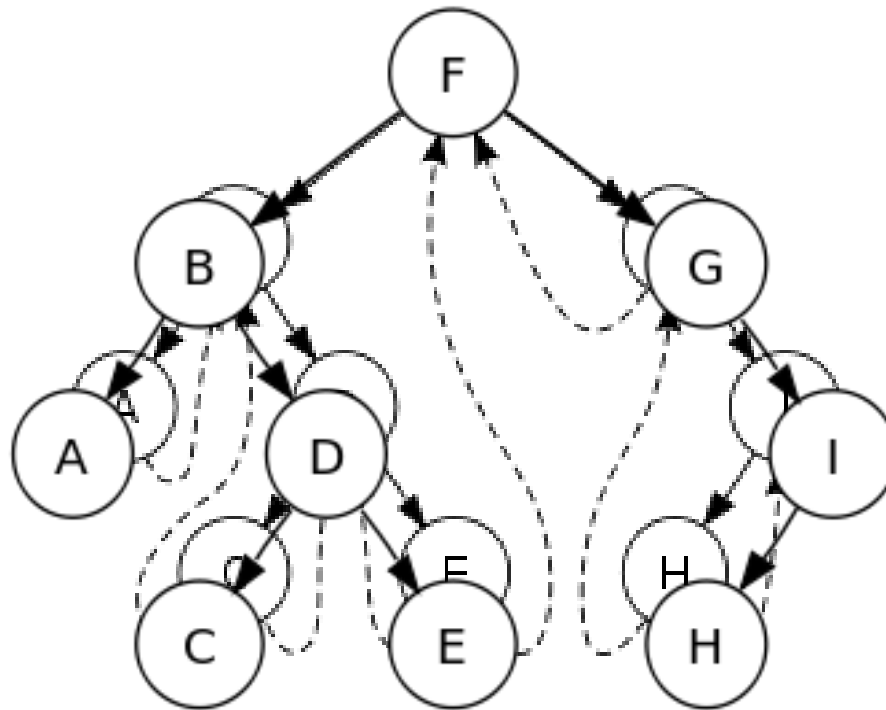
- Decentralized, large & complex institutions
- Going broad vs. deep
- Consistency
- Accessibility
- Feasibility
- Sustainability & Responsiveness

Response: Identify and Adapt Data Collection Mechanisms

Considerations:

- Level of data collection and dissemination
- Existing vs. new system
- Systematic vs. episodic
- Quality and type of the infrastructure
- Resources

VCU's Most Important Discovery



This is not
a linear
process

Community Engagement Data Collected at VCU

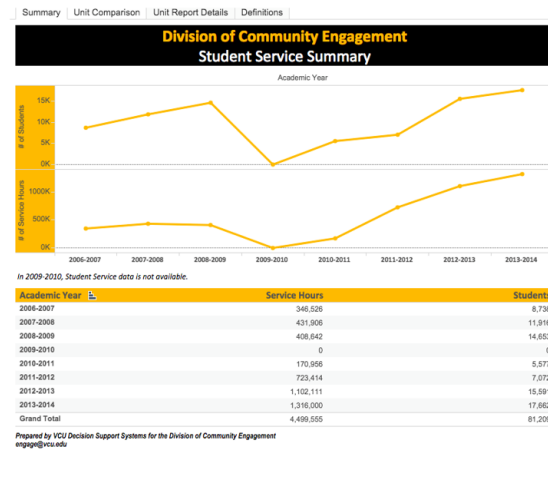
- Service-Learning
- Community-Engaged Research (CEnR)
- Student Community Service
- University-Community partnerships
- Impact as an anchor institution
- Faculty/Staff Community Service

Holton, V., & Jettner, J. F. (2016). Community Engagement and Regional Impact: A Review of Systematic Data Collection Mechanisms. Virginia Commonwealth University. Richmond, VA. Available http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/community_resources/.

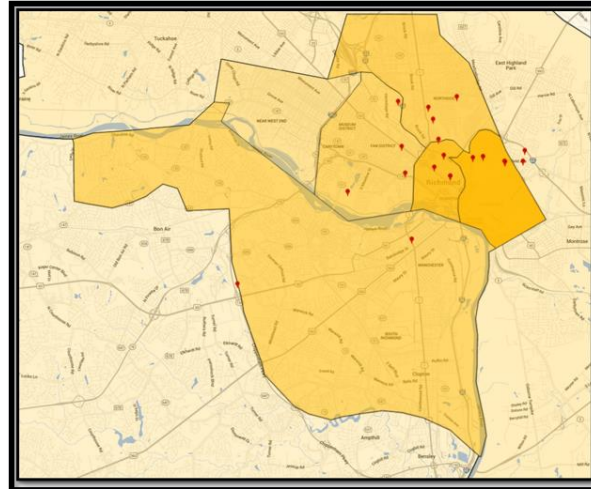


Tools Developed for Community Engagement

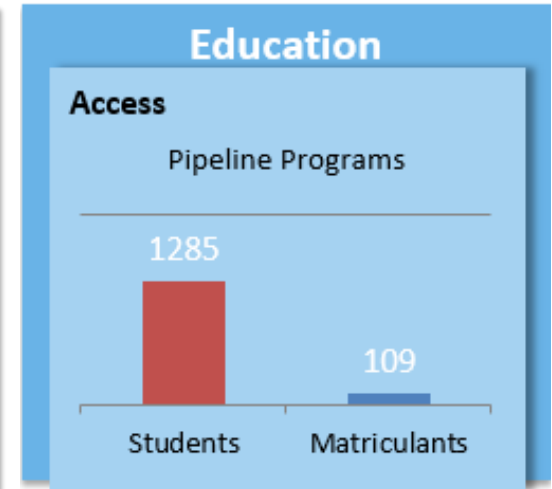
Student Service Hours



**Community
Engagement
Dashboard**



**Partnership
Map**



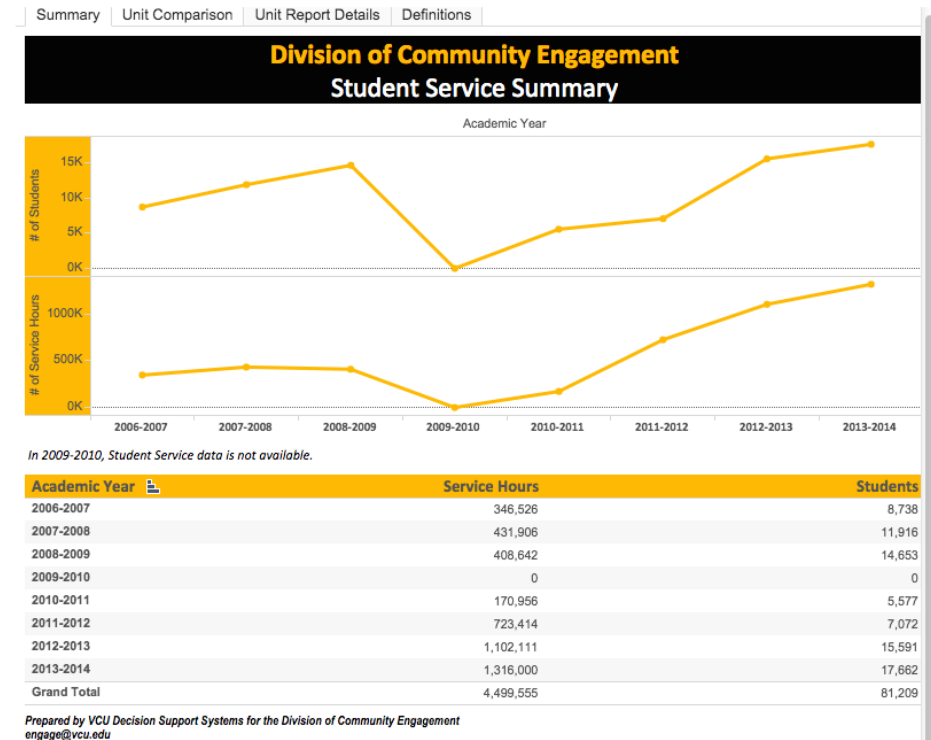
**Pilot Anchor
Measurements**

Community Engagement Dashboard

University-wide data

- Service-learning
- Student service
- Community-engaged research (CEnR)

Student Service Hours



Open source CTSA technology

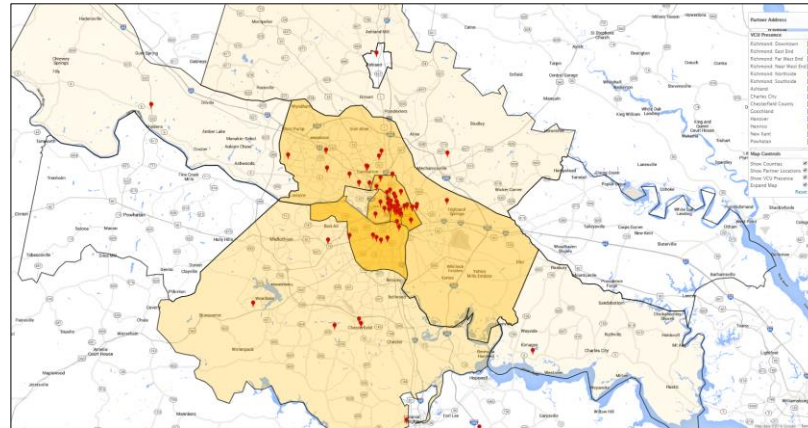
Creates a research network

102 universities registered as VIVO users

VCU faculty profiles include:

- Publications
- Research interest areas
- Courses taught
- Other

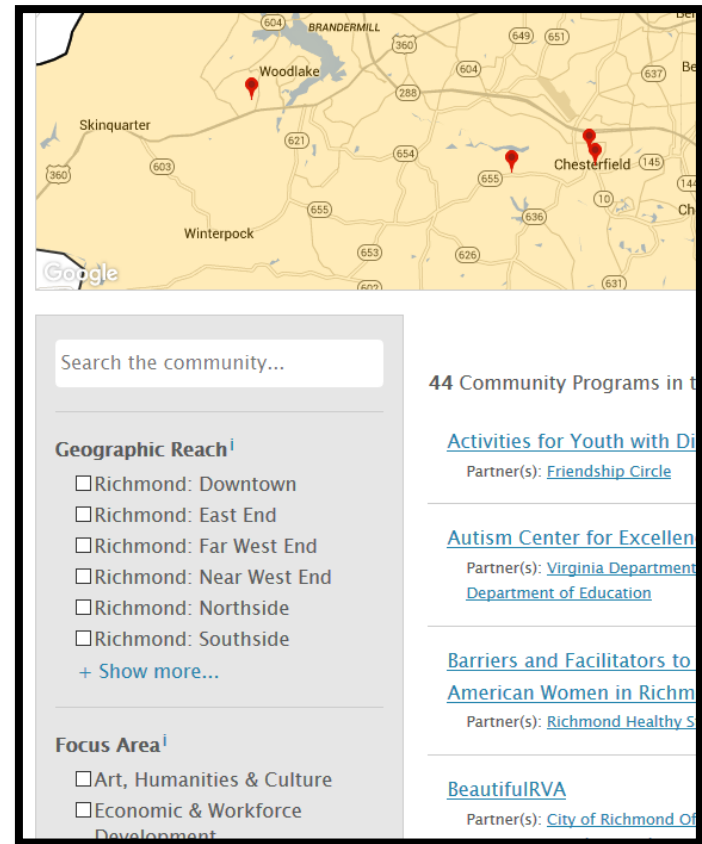




VCU the **only** university to develop a
Community-Engaged Partnership Map extension of
VIVO.

The Map includes interactive information about:

- Community organizations
- VCU and VCUHealth units
- Focus topics
- Regional reach
- Activity types



An aerial photograph of a city at dusk or dawn. The city lights are visible, and the sky is a mix of blue and orange. In the background, there are mountains. The text is overlaid on the image.

Anchor institutions are defined as,
“place-based entities such as universities
and hospitals that are tied to their
surroundings by mission, invested capital,
or relationships to customers, employees,
and vendors”

(Dubb, McKinley, & Howard, 2013, p. v)



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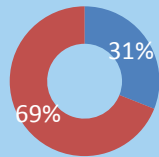
Pilot Anchor Measurement Framework

Economic Development

Workforce

Real Estate

Equitable Hiring

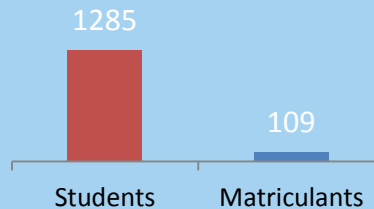


■ Minority ■ Non-Minority

Education

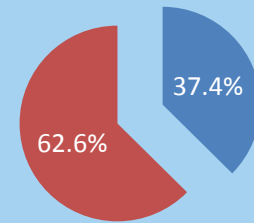
Access

Pipeline Programs



Health

Access



■ non-ER ■ ER

Green & Safe Neighborhoods

Safe Campuses & Streets

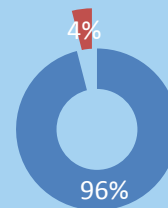
Greening VCU



STARS
Silver
Ranking

Cultural Vitality

Public Events



■ Free ■ Not Free

Community Building

Partnerships

Engagement

17,602 Students

1,316,000 Hours

\$29,675,000 Value



VCU

Other potential IR partners include:

- Student Affairs
- Office of Research
- Human Resources
- Libraries
- Development
- Academic Affairs
- Government Relations
- Public Affairs
- Finance and Administration
- Police
- Alumni Relations



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Thank You

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